THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

# MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

*"We begin to live only when we begin to love. And we begin to love only when self dies, and we live to bless others."*

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## THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS AND THE WORLD.

BY ELDER WILLIAM A. MORTON.

(*Continued from page 30.*)

LATTER-DAY SAINTS:—Before proceeding farther, permit us to ask you a question or two: Have we not proved, and that, too, beyond all controversy, that a living, active, and abiding faith in God the Father, and in His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, is indispensable to man's salvation?

The World:—You have shown that, in order for a man to please God, not to mention being saved of Him, he must have faith in Him, and in His Son Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Latter-day Saints:—Have we not proven most conclusively that men must repent of their sins and turn away from their iniquities before they can gain access to the Kingdom of God?

The World:—Sufficient evidence has been given to prove that sincere and genuine repentance must be exhibited in the lives of all men who hope for salvation, for the decree has gone forth that no unclean thing can enter the kingdom of heaven.

Latter-day Saints:—Have we not proven that the proper mode of baptism is immersion, and that the object of baptism is for the remission of sins?

The World:—The testimony of your witnesses in regard to the object and essentiality of baptism cannot be refuted. Christ's answer to Nicodemus—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God"—should put an end to all discussion on that subject.

Latter-day Saints:—Have we not proven that after a man has complied with the ordinance of baptism, he must receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands of authorized servants of God?

The World:—Such was the practice in the primitive church. After baptism the Apostles confirmed the believers by the laying on of hands, with prayer, and conferring the Holy Ghost.

Latter-day Saints:—These are the first principles of the Gospel of Christ, and the Apostle Paul has declared that "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1: 8.)

The World:—You have laid before us in a most clear and convincing manner the plan of salvation. Permit us now to ask you, What is to become of those who have died in ignorance of the Gospel of Christ?

Latter-day Saints:—Our reply to that question is this: God is a God of mercy and justice. He does not seek a crop where there has been no seed sown. All those who have died in ignorance of the Gospel are in the hands of Him whose nature and whose name is Love, whose desire is that all His children may be saved and brought to a knowledge of the truth. He has made provision whereby the glad tidings of great joy which the angel brought to the shepherds on the morning of the Savior's birth shall be proclaimed unto every son and daughter of God. The Creator has made of one blood all nations that dwell on the earth. There is no respect of persons with God. His glorious plan of redemption was not revealed for the benefit of a favored class. When the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds on the plains of Judæa, he said unto them, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all* people." (Luke 2: 10.) Now, it is an undisputed fact that millions had died before that time without having heard those good tidings, just as millions have died since whose ears have never been saluted with the good news of the Savior's birth, and of the great redemption which He purchased for the whole human family by the shedding of His most precious blood. Who could be so lost to all reason as to think for a moment that God would consign to everlasting punishment all those who died in absolute ignorance of His divine laws? I now ask you, as Paul asked the Roman saints, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10: 14.) But here is the Apostle Peter, a recognized authority on the doctrine of Christ. Hear what he has to say on the subject.

## TESTIMONY OF PETER.

The World:—Peter, would you have us believe that the Gospel is preached to those who die in ignorance of its divine truths?

Peter:—I am surprised to hear you ask such a question when so much has been written on the matter. Jesus Christ came, not to save the living only, but the dead also. He declared that if He were lifted up from the earth He would draw *all* men unto Him, (John 12: 32), and that the hour was coming when the dead, as well as the living, would hear His voice. (John 5: 25.)

The World:—Then, according to your testimony, Christ, after having preached the Gospel to men in the flesh, went also and preached the same Gospel to those who had died without having heard of its saving principles?

Peter:—He did; and not to them only, but also to those who rejected it when it was preached to them on the earth.

The World:—This is certainly strange doctrine to us. Our ministers have never taught us that the dead could be saved as well as the living.

Peter:—That is because they do not understand the Scriptures. The men who wrote the Scriptures wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and in order for men to understand the writings of the prophets and other inspired servants of God, they must be in possession of the same Spirit, for "the things of God knoweth no man but by the Spirit of God." If you will permit me, I will endeavor to make the Scriptures plain to your understanding. Noah, as you all know, was a preacher of righteousness. He was called by the Lord to preach the Gospel to the people of his generation. But they refused to listen to his warning; they turned deaf ears to his entreaties, and at last the Lord came out in judgment upon them and destroyed them from the face of the earth. But did He then cast them off forever? No, indeed. The Lord does not keep His anger forever. He had prepared a place for them, for in His house there are many mansions. He had prepared a prison-house for the wicked and rebellious, and when the antedeluvians were destroyed in the flesh, their spirits were shut up in the Lord's prison-house, where they were kept for thousands of years, or in other words, till they had paid the uttermost farthing.

The World.—And did those people have the opportunity afterwards of again hearing the Gospel?

Peter:—I am coming to that. I told you that their spirits were shut up in prison for thousands of years. Now, I do not ask you to accept of my testimony alone concerning this matter. I am going to read to you what Isaiah the Prophet has written concerning the Lord's prison-house and its inmates. Here are his words: "And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days

shall they be visited." (Isaiah 24: 22.) Now, let us stop for a moment and analyze this Scripture. There is a depth of meaning in it, I assure you. Writing was not done with such ease in Isaiah's time as it is to-day. The prophet did not pen the words which I have read just for pastime—they were written for our profit and learning. He pointed out most clearly the fate of those who would not hearken to the voice of the Lord or of His servants, but spent the days of their probation in gratifying their carnal appetites. They were to be gathered together as prisoners, and shut up in a prison, where they were to be confined for many days. But they were not to be left without hope. The promise was made that when they had paid the penalty for their misdeeds they would be visited. This, according to the words of the prophet, was part of Christ's missionary work; He was to preach redemption not only to the living, but to the dead as well; He was to visit the prisoners in the prison-house and preach deliverance to them. I quote from his writings: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isaiah 42: 6, 7.) Now, I desire to remind you that Christ confirmed this prophecy of Isaiah. He told the people that it referred to Him, and that it would be fulfilled in Him. Standing up in the synagogue in Nazareth one Sabbath day He quoted Isaiah's prophecy, as follows: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4: 18, 19.) So, you see that part of Christ's work was to preach deliverance to the captives, and open the prison to those who were bound.

The World:—When did the Messiah perform that work?

Peter:—During the three days that His body lay in the tomb.

The World:—Was His spirit not with His Father during that time?

Peter:—According to Christ's own testimony it was not. When the Lord appeared to Mary, after His resurrection, He told her to touch Him not, for He had not yet ascended to His Father. (John 20: 17.) In two epistles which I wrote to the Saints in early days I made special reference to Christ's visit to the spirits in prison. This is what I said: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison: which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few,

that is, eight souls were saved by water." (I. Peter 3: 18-20.) "For for this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (I. Peter 4: 6.) While this doctrine may be strange to you, it was quite well understood by the Saints in former days.

The World:—We thank you, Peter, for your testimony.

Latter-day Saints:—Before calling another witness we will quote to you the comments of Professor A. Hinderkoper, a German writer, and Bishop Alford on the words of Peter. The former says: "In the second and third centuries every branch and division of the Christian Church, so far as their records enable us to judge, believed that Christ preached to the departed spirits." (Haley's Discrepancies of the Bible.) Bishop Alford says: "I understand these words (I Peter 3: 19) to say that our Lord in his disembodied state, did go to the place of detention of departed spirits, and did there announce his work of redemption; preach salvation in fact, to the disembodied spirits of those who refused to obey the voice of God when the judgement of the flood was hanging over them." We respectfully ask you to listen to what the Apostle Paul has to say on this matter.

## PAUL'S EVIDENCE.

The World:—Paul, do you believe that the Gospel is preached to men after they depart this life?

Paul:—I do. I corroborate all that the Apostle Peter has said concerning salvation for the dead. This doctrine was well understood by the people in our day. Jesus, you remember, told Nicodemus that except a man were born of water and of the Spirit, he could not enter the kingdom of God. Now, in those days the people asked the same question that many people ask to-day, "If baptism is essential to salvation, what is to become of those who died without having been baptized?" Had the Lord failed to make provision for such people, it would have revealed an imperfection in the plan of salvation, which is not the case, for "the law of the Lord is perfect." Peter has told you that the Gospel was preached to the dead; I taught the people the doctrine of baptism for the dead. Here is what I wrote to the Corinthians; "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" (I. Cor. 15: 29.) The Saints in former times believed in and performed a vicarious work for the dead—they were baptized for their dead. But after the death of the Apostles men transgressed the laws and changed the ordinances of the Gospel, in consequence of which darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people.

The World:—You are excused, Paul.

Latter-day Saints (to the World):—We desire to call your attention to a prophecy which was made by Malachi. He prophesied as

follows: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. 4: 5, 6.) Now, we testify to you, in all soberness, that this prophecy has been literally fulfilled. On the 3rd day of April, 1836, the Prophet Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple. Addressing them he said: "Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi; testifying that I should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors." We have built a number of temples, in which baptism and other ordinances have been performed in behalf of millions of our dead relatives and friends. This is also in fulfillment of the prophecy of Micah, who said: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Micah 4: 1, 2.) The work for the dead is still in progress. The hearts of the fathers are being turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Blessed are all those who engage in this glorious work, for great shall be their joy when they meet their loved ones who have passed behind the veil, and for whom they stood as saviors upon Mount Zion.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

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## ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN.

By Thomas Davidson.

1. Rely upon your own energies and do not wait for, or depend upon other people.

2. Cling with all your might to your own highest ideals, and do not be led astray by such vulgar aims as wealth, position, popularity. Be yourself.

3. Your worth consists of what you are, and not in what you have. What you are will show in what you do.

4. Never fret, repine, or envy. Do not make yourself unhappy by comparing your circumstances with those of more fortunate

men, but make the most of the opportunities you have. Employ profitably every moment.

5. Associate with the noblest people you can find; read the best books; live with the mighty. Learn to be happy alone.

6. Do not believe that all greatness and heroism are in the past. Learn to discover princes, prophets, heroes and saints among the people about you. Be assured they are there.

7. Be on earth what good people hope to be in heaven.

8. Cultivate ideal friendships, and gather into an intimate circle all your acquaintances who are hungering for truth and right. Remember that heaven itself can be nothing but the intimacy of pure and noble souls.

9. Do not shrink from any useful or kindly act, however hard or repellant it may be. The worth of acts is measured by the spirit in which they are performed.

10. If the world despises you because you do not follow its way, pay no heed to it. But be sure your way is right.

11. If a thousand plans fail, be not disheartened. As long as your purposes are right, you have not failed.

12. Examine yourself every night and see whether you have progressed in knowledge, sympathy and helpfulness during the day. Count every day a loss in which no progress has been made.

13. Seek enjoyment in energy, not in dalliance. Our worth is measured solely by what we do.

14. Let not your goodness be professional; let it be the simple, natural outcome of your character. Therefore cultivate character.

15. If you do wrong, say so, and make what atonement you can. This is true nobleness. Have no moral debts.

16. When in doubt how to act, ask yourself what does nobility command. Be on good terms with yourself.

17. Look for no reward for goodness but goodness itself. Remember heaven and hell are utterly immoral institutions, if they are meant as reward and punishment.

18. Give whatever countenance and help you can to every movement and institution that is working for good. Be not sectarian.

19. Wear no placards within or without. Be human first.

20. Never be satisfied until you have understood the meaning of the world and the purpose of your own life, and have reduced your world to a rational cosmos.

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**Jordon's Flood Westward Bound.**—The first shipment of thirty thousand kilogrammes of Jordon water left Jerusalem via Jaffa, for New York, on Friday, November 9th, 1906. Colonel Nadand, who has personally superintended the operations at the river, returns immediately to America. The consignment comprises fifty barrels of water sealed in the presence of the American Consul and the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 1907.

## FAITH AS A HEALING POWER.

When the Savior of mankind sent out the Twelve whom He had chosen to be His Apostles to preach the Gospel and to proclaim "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He told them to "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils," and added, "freely ye have received, freely give." (See Matt. 10.) Thus, part of the mission placed upon them was to deliver people out of their afflictions. How this was to be accomplished is evident from the manner in which the Christ performed it Himself. When delivering the sick of their diseases, or the "possessed" from the evil spirits which had entered them, He almost invariably exclaimed, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Faith was the moving power by which the desired effects were produced. Sometimes it was faith exercised by the Redeemer, at others by the individual obtaining the blessing, and occasionally by both the healer and the healed.

When Christ sent out His Apostles after His resurrection to "preach the Gospel to every creature," He promised that certain signs should follow them that believed; among them that they should, in His name, cast out devils, speak with new tongues, lay hands on the sick and they should recover." (Mark 16: 15-16.) It is clear that these gifts and blessings were the effects of faith and that they were to be enjoyed, not only by the Apostles themselves, but by believers in their ministry and in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That the members of the Church of our Lord received these favors is very plain from the writings of Paul and others, as may be particularly seen in the epistle to the Corinthians. (I Cor. 12.) The power of faith as a spiritual force is set forth with some detail in Hebrews, eleventh chapter.

It was by faith that Christ rebuked the winds, controlled the waves, fed the multitude, turned water into wine, raised the dead and performed those mighty works which are recorded in the New Testament. He taught the doctrine that "all things are possible to them that believe." This is a principle but little understood by mankind. And it is not in the complete control of any human

being. It is the gift of God. It cannot be exercised merely by the will of man. It is proper that this power should not be so wielded. Sickness and pain, disease and death, like sorrow and grief, mental anguish and sadness of soul, though all the consequences of violated law, are permitted by the Almighty as part of His economy and necessary for the education of mortal beings. If faith could be exercised at will there would be no sickness or pain remaining, and death itself would be prevented. Sufficient faith, however, is given of God, through the means He has provided, for the relief of the suffering and the manifestation of His power.

Faith is an abiding principle. It does not change, nor is it obliterated by the process of the ages. It is the same to-day as in centuries that are past. It is a cause which always produces the same effects through all periods of time. The Latter-day Saints know, beyond a doubt, that the gifts and blessings which were the fruits of faith in the first century of the Christian era, are attainable to-day in the same manner and in the same richness and profusion as in times of old. The Apostles and Elders of this last dispensation have received from the Lord similiar instructions and authority as did His servants when He was on the earth in person, and the same signs do follow "them that believe." They are very frequently manifested among them. There is not a single gift of the Spirit enjoyed in the early Christian Church that is not had in the Church of the latter-days. The faith by which those blessings can be had is obtainable through prayer and obedience to the commandments of God as revealed in the Gospel.

Occasionally some remarkable instances of the healing power, through the administration of the Elders of this Church, are published in the STAR and other Church periodicals. This is not for the purpose of glorifying the men by the laying on of whose hands the power of God has been invoked. It is to increase faith in the hearts of His Saints. It is not to give a sign to unbelievers. Our Savior rebuked those who sought after signs, and His doctrine was that healings and those wonders commonly called "miracles," were the effects, not the cause of the power of faith.

The Lord has given authority to the Elders of His Church in these days similar to that conferred upon His servants in former days. When members of the Church were sick in ancient apostolic times, they were to send for the Elders of the Church, who were to anoint them with oil and pray over them and the promise was, "the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up." (James 6: 14-15.) In a revelation given February 9th, 1831, the Lord said, "It shall come to pass that he that hath faith in me to be healed and is not appointed unto death shall be healed; he who hath faith to see shall see; he who hath faith to hear shall hear; the lame who have faith to leap shall leap; and they who have not faith to do these things, but believe in me, have power to become my sons; and inasmuch as they break not

my laws thou shalt bear their infirmities." In the same revelation it is said, "And whosoever among you are sick, and have not faith to be healed, but believe, shall be nourished with all tenderness, with herbs and mild food, and that not by the hand of an enemy. And the Elders of the Church, two or more, shall be called, and shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name; and if they die they shall die unto me, and if they live they shall live unto me." (Doc. and Cov., Sec. 42: 43-52.)

It should be observed that all the blessings of the healing power come by faith. We hear sometimes of testimonies borne by the Saints that they were "healed by the Priesthood." In one sense of the term that may be viewed as correct, and yet, in the full understanding of the healing power it is incorrect. The Elders of the Church are instructed to administer the ordinance for the sick by the authority of the Priesthood which they hold, yet it is not the men holding it but "the prayer of faith that saves the sick," and the glory belongs to God and not to man. There are some persons who have the gift of healing. They should use it as the Lord directs, with the full understanding that it is given of Him not to be used with boasting, or as a profession, or for earthly reward, or to gain distinction, or to be paid for in money, but to be freely bestowed as it was freely given to them. The Saints should understand that every Elder in the Church can be used by the Almighty as an instrument for their deliverance from pain and sickness, and when they are healed through the ordinance instituted in the Church for that purpose, it is to God they must give the glory. He is the source of the blessing, and man is but His instrument for its bestowal.

It is not wise to hold up these manifestations as marvels to cause the wonder of the multitude. Jesus frequently said when the sick were healed under His hands or by His touch, "see thou tell no man." The Elders of the Church who are blest in their administrations to the sick should bear in mind the admonition of the Lord "to beware of boasting." This is particularly enjoined upon them in the casting out of evil spirits. It is not to be with "boasting lest they be seized therewith."

The use of oil, consecrated for the purpose, to anoint the sick, is customary in the Church now as in early times. It is advisable, when consecrated oil is at hand, but it is not essential. Anointing with oil is, in itself, in some cases, palliative of pain. It is also an object lesson, something visible and tangible, as an incentive to faith, but the sick may be, and are frequently healed by the laying on of hands without the oil and even without a touch, by faith through prayer. The essential influence is faith, and that comes by the gift of God and therefore, as we have repeated, to Him should be given the glory. Some Elders insist upon administering the oil internally. This is a mistake. In some cases, no doubt, the inward partaking of the oil is efficacious. Pure olive oil, with

the blessing of God, is beneficial to some people, but to others the swallowing of oil produces nausea, and it should not be forced upon anybody.

Little children are frequently healed through the faith of their parents, and of those who lay hands upon them. It is the privilege of a mother to lay her hands upon her sick child and pray for it, and, as in the case of the administration by the Elders, "the prayer of faith shall save the sick." We have been asked whether people have been healed by the laying on of hands of persons not in the Church. We answer, yes. According to their faith so it shall be unto them, and this emphasises the doctrine we are endeavoring to impress upon our readers. It is the doctrine of Christ. "All things are possible to them that believe."

We are living in an age of unbelief. It is our duty to preach faith as the first principle of true religion, as its beginning in the soul of man, as an essential to salvation, as a spiritual force; as the gift of God and a power which, when it increases among mankind, shall be a means of conquering sin and suffering, pain and sorrow, Satan and his hosts, darkness and death, and of filling the world with life and light and peace and joy, and the glory of God to cover this globe, shine in its atmosphere and prepare the way for the advent of the King of kings to reign forever and ever.

C. W. P.

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**A Liverpool M.P. on Toleration.**—Mr. W. W. Rutherford, M.P., in the West Derby Division of Liverpool, replying to Mr. H. Percy Ward, the secular lecturer, expressed himself as follows in relation to the Blasphemy Laws: "If it should be found that there are any statutes which are creating a hardship to-day I should be prepared to vote for their repeal. What, however, I would point out to you and your society very strongly is this, that I should think it very wrong for anyone in the presence, say, of Mr. Quilliam, who is known to be a conscientious Mohammedan, to create animosity or show intolerance or otherwise behave badly by scoffing at and seeking to bring into contempt the Mohammedan religion. The same thing applies to Roman Catholics. I am opposed to processions down the streets where they largely dwell and observations being made in their presence calculated to cast ridicule upon objects and doctrines which they hold dear. The proper spirit to cultivate is that of toleration and regard for the opinions and views of other people. So long as Secularists confine their operations to advocating their own views in such a way as not to distress other people, raise religious animosity, and become a cause of offence to their neighbors, then I think they ought to be allowed to entertain those views in perfect freedom and peace; but it is only when one section of the people resort to conduct which interferes with the comfort and well-being of others that they ought to be brought under any legal restraints."—*The Crescent.*

## THE UNITED ORDER—"ALL THINGS IN COMMON."

By William Ward.

To hug the wealth ye cannot use,
And lack the riches all may gain
O, blind and wanting wit to choose,
Who house the chaff and burn the grain!
And still doth Life with starry towers
Lure to the bright divine ascent—
Be yours the things ye would; be ours
The things that are more excellent.

William Watson.

One Sunday afternoon, a few weeks ago, two "Mormon" Elders attended an afternoon service held in connection with one of the leading Congregational churches of England. At the close of the services, one of the officers of the church announced that they had some books for sale, for the small sum of a penny each. The Elders decided to purchase a copy and their surprise can be imagined when a pamphlet was handed to them bearing the title, "All things in Common," the treatise by Mr. William Ward, author of "How can I help England," etc. It shows how the doctrines of the Gospel, as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, are finding their way into all parts of the earth. Mr. Ward writes:

Why do so many people who profess to believe in the teaching of the Bible, and are identified with the activities of Christian churches, look with contempt and derision on the idea embodied in the phrase "All Things in Common"? By many it is regarded as being no less repugnant than sheer atheism. A short time ago I listened to what was described as a "Popular Lecture" delivered in a manufacturing town in the north of England, in connection with a society associated with a Christian church. The greater part of the lecture consisted in holding up to ridicule various classes of people who were represented as holding erroneous and foolish opinions. The lecturer, as a kind of climax, described those people who advocated a system of having "All Things in Common." These people, he said, were the most ridiculously foolish of all, "the flattest of all flats."

I attended a short time afterwards a service at one of the leading metropolitan churches, when the preacher, whose fame is world wide, dealt with the same topic. He denounced it in scathing terms, classifying the holders of such views with atheists and anarchists, and warning his hearers in impassioned tones against such a heresy. The people, he declared, who advocated such a system, were those who were anxious to share the good things belonging to other folk, having none of their own to share.

The sentiments expressed by these two men are by no means un-

common among professing Christians, in spite of the fact that the very phrase itself is taken from the Bible, and embodies a principle that is an essential feature of Biblical teaching. You remember the circumstances that gave rise to the phrase. It was on the day of Pentecost that the Apostle Peter, fired with an enthusiasm and an unction such as he had never before experienced, delivered one of the most fervid and remarkable discourses ever uttered by mortal man. The fragmentary report we have of it in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles constitutes one of the finest portions of oratorical literature we possess. So marvelous was the effect on the great crowd who heard it, that not less than three thousand embraced the truth and threw in their lot with the Christian community.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.

I want you to notice particularly that these three thousand people who joined the Christians "continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine": they accepted the teaching of Peter, James, John, and the rest of the apostles, men who had been in close touch with Christ during the three years of His ministry, and had drawn their knowledge and inspiration direct from the Master Himself. They were familiar with His teaching, and with His practice. During their association with Him, they had had one common treasury. Now they, in their turn, were teaching others, conveying to them the principles and precepts they had learned from the Master, and those whom they taught began to put the teaching into practice at once. From what they learned, it seemed to them the most natural thing in the world to abolish all distinctions of rich and poor among themselves, and live together in the bonds of a genuine brotherhood. Hence, it happened that all those who "continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine" immediately adopted a mode of life based on the principle of having "All Things in Common." Notice, also, that then were the days of the Church's prosperity. When they put into actual practice the principles they had learned as to what Christianity is, "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."

Do not run away with the idea that the adoption of the communal principle was the outcome of a frenzied fit of religious excitement, as some people have tried to make out. Some time after the event of Peter's sermon and its marvelous result, when the

people were being drawn to the new doctrine in multitudes, the rulers grew alarmed. They realized that if this thing were allowed to go on unchecked, the foundations of society would be shaken, and government by autocratic kings and rulers would inevitably come to an end. So a period of persecution set in with the avowed object of stamping out the new religion. But persecution only increased the ardour and enthusiasm of the apostles, and again we read, at the close of the fourth chapter, of more great conquests. The number of converts grew amazingly, and precisely the same result took place. This is how the sacred historian records the fact:

> And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.
>
> And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.
>
> Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

The preposterous and ridiculous attempts that have been made to explain away the plain meaning of these two clear statements would be amusing if it were not for the sad result following from placing a wrong interpretation on a vital principle of Christian faith and practice. It is distinctly refreshing to contrast the fantastic interpretations often given in order to avoid the plain commonsense meaning, with the utterances of great men who have looked into the matter with the sole object of arriving at the truth, and with no desire to make the meaning square with their preconceived notions. I know of nothing more pointed and convincing on this subject than the view expressed by John Wesley. Now Wesley was a man who, in a pre-eminent degree, was noted for bringing to his interpretation of Scripture an open mind. He was not bound by any particular school of theological thought. He commonly set at defiance conventional ideas and proprieties when he perceived that they were not in harmony either with the dictates of common-sense or the obvious meaning of the sacred writer. He was also a man of profound learning. His reputation as a scholar and a conscientious seeker after truth was at stake in commenting on so vital a topic as this, and I question if there is another name in the annals of modern religious history that is fraught with greater weight than that of John Wesley in a question of this character. This is his view of the matter:

> To say the Christians had all things in common only till the destruction of Jerusalem is not true, for many so lived long after. Not that there was any positive command for so doing. It needed not, for love constrained them. It was a natural fruit of that love wherewith each member of the community loved every other as his own soul. And if the whole Christian Church had continued in this spirit, this usage might have continued through all ages. To affirm, there-

fore, that Christ did not design it should not continue, is neither more nor less to affirm that Christ did not design this measure of love should continue. I see no proof of this.

Wesley's argument should be a sufficient answer to those pessimistic souls who argue that the idea of having "All Things in Common" might do very well in the early stages of Christianity, when the number of adherents was comparatively small, but that such a system could not possibly work in so vast a community as the organized forces of Christianity present to-day.

How was it the system broke down? This question has been effectively answered by Morrison Davidson, who has shown that it continued to prevail among the early Christians until the days of the nefarious Emperor Constantine. He did all that human ingenuity and cruelty could devise to exterminate the Christians, and finding that the more he persecuted them the more they prospered, he affected conversion to Christianity himself, took the Church under the patronage of the State, and immediately the seeds of dissension and disintegration were sown, its glory and grandeur faded, and its power and possibilities for good were immediately dwarfed.

Will the system of having "All Things in Common" ever be restored? It is being restored under our very eyes. He that has ears to hear and eyes to see cannot fail to perceive that, by a process of evolution, the Almighty is working in the hearts and minds of men, and changes in this direction are becoming so rapid and numerous that we seem to be almost within measurable distance of its realization. There is more in the applicability of Cowper's famous lines to the circumstances of our times than many of us perceive:

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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**Resurrection of Christ.**—To say that the resurrection of Jesus is a mystery, is to say but little. You are a mystery; the tiniest thing you touch, the commonest thing you see, is a mystery; every leaf holds a secret, and every grain of sand; first know these secrets—know the secret of the tint that fringes a daisy; know the secret of crystallization that shoots in the snowflake; know the secret whence the gorse gets its bloom, and how the rose distils fragrance; then from lower things rise to higher, until you rise high enough to know the secret of Christ's resurrection.—CHARLES STANFORD, D.D.

## FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

**Change of Address.**—The Manchester conference address has been changed from 6 Westwood Street, Moss Side, Manchester, to 26 Clarendon Road, Swinton Grove, C-on-M., Manchester.

**Departures.**—The following Elders from the British Mission sailed, January 16th, 1907, via New York, per s.s. *Arabic*: Earl A. Stratford, David W. Janes, Jr., David Taylor. Elder William A. Garrett of the Manchester conference was honorably released and returned home by the same boat.

## THE PEACE ANTHEM.

O Father of mankind,
Do Thou the nations bind
In bonds of love;
Bid every land be free,
Let race with race agree,
And earth be ruled by Thee,
As heaven above.

Make Thou all wars to cease,
Round the whole world be peace—
Man's wrath control.
Let love her reign extend,
Till all the nations blend
In concord without end,
From pole to pole.

Haste Thou the glorious time
Foretold in song sublime,
When earth shall rest;
Changed then the sword to share,
No more shall people bear
The weight of earth's despair,
But all be blest.

SELECTED.

## DIED.

EVANS.—At Bradford, December 24th, 1906, of consumption, Sister Ellen Evans, aged 33 years. She was a faithful Latter-day Saint.

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